

FORM 12-62 2024

COMPLETED AS No. 1579/66 DATED 17 JUNE 1966

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SUBJECT : Juan Bosch and the Dominican Political Future

REQUESTED BY : Self-initiated by Chief Caribbean Branch/WH

PURPOSE : To examine the consequences of Bosch's Refusal to Accede Gracefully and/or leave the Dominican Republic)

DESIRED LENGTH :

SPECIAL DISSEM : Routine internal and external GRAPHICS? _____

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COORDINATION : DDP/WH ONE [REDACTED]

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Juan Bosch and the Dominican Political Future

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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

JUAN BOSCH AND THE DOMINICAN POLITICAL FUTURE

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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No. 1579/66

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
17 June 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM*

Juan Bosch and the Dominican Political Future

SUMMARY

In his 13 June address, Juan Bosch made clear his intention to remain active in Dominican politics by leading the opposition to president-elect Balaguer and the new government that is to take office on 1 July. Balaguer does not appear to be moving quickly enough to prevent Bosch from seizing the initiative by pressing the new government for a program of social and economic reform. If Bosch succeeds in maintaining leadership of the Dominican left, his tactics could upset what at best will be a fragile political stability.

* Prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence;
coordinated with ONE and DDP.

1. Juan Bosch now has made it clear he intends to remain active in Dominican politics. Although Bosch's crushing electoral defeat has undoubtedly diminished his stature and eventually may leave his leadership of the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) open to challenge, he remains a major political figure. His active, vocal opposition to the government-elect would significantly add to its woes. Indeed, Bosch has indicated he will propose a concrete program of reform designed both to seize the initiative from Balaguer and to put Balaguer under pressures to move ahead with some reform measures.

2. Bosch says he will take the role of "creative, democratic and serious" opponent of the government. One of his immediate goals will be to "ensure political liberties," in part to create an atmosphere in which his party will be able to operate unchecked.

25X1X [REDACTED] has said that the PRD leader will press Balaguer for the removal of "undemocratic elements" from the military. Although Bosch subsequently has denied advancing such an objective, he undoubtedly will oppose any step by Balaguer to install military leaders who adamantly oppose him and the PRD. In addition, Bosch is likely to propose sweeping economic and social changes that go far beyond the pragmatic approach Balaguer is expected to take.

3. By contrast, during the 15 days since his election, Balaguer has not moved quickly to enunciate a government program. There is no clear indication of what type of cabinet appointments or administrative program Balaguer has in mind. He evidently does not intend to disclose either until after his inauguration. In the meantime, embassy officials have the impression from talks with Reformist Party leaders that even Balaguer's most intimate advisers cannot speak with authority and have been handicapped in formulating specific policies.

4. Bosch's talents well suit him to the role of opposition leader--probably better than they suit him to administering a government. His intellect, his skills at political infighting, and his ability to make and espouse popular causes equip him well to

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retain the support of the country's articulate and organized elements--the PRD rank and file, students, intellectuals, and organized labor.

5. The effectiveness of Bosch's opposition to Balaguer also will depend on his maintaining leadership of the PRD and control of its significant, albeit minority, representation in the Congress. Bosch's tactics of the past two weeks appear designed to do just this. For example, one of his motives in questioning the legitimacy of Balaguer's victory has been to placate PRD radicals. At the same time, he has been soothing moderates by describing his intentions to enter into a constructive opposition and to shun militant agitation. Bosch may have asked for the much-publicized 6 June meeting with Balaguer in part to demonstrate to possible PRD dissidents that he was still a leader of national significance.

6. Although there has always existed within the PRD a current of discontent with Bosch's caudillo style of leadership, it has not been of much significance. Bosch, for example, has been able easily to outmaneuver PRD organization man Angel Miolan. At present, there is no other figure in the PRD--or in the Dominican left--who appears capable of effectively challenging Bosch.

7. There remains a slim chance that over the next few months or so Bosch might give up active political life. For example, he might resume his sinecure at the University of Puerto Rico. Various pressures, such as his fear of assassination, now only a little less intense than before the elections, and the stinging personal rebuke Bosch probably felt he received at the polls might make such a course attractive.

8. It is unlikely that in the immediate future Bosch will countenance the use of force against Balaguer. Bosch's public urging to his followers that they keep calm has aided in restraining hotheads. Nevertheless, by crying fraud and conceding defeat gracelessly, Bosch--whether meaning to or not--has created doubt in the minds of some of his followers over the legitimacy of Balaguer's victory.

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9. The kind of oppositionist tactics Bosch has begun to use may prove to be almost as disruptive as violence. The Dominican political fabric is weak, and it is not at all certain that government by inter-party consensus can operate in such a fragile political environment. Should Bosch's advocacy of legislative objectives prove effective, it may alienate from Balaguer conservative military and civilian elements whose tolerance of the government is essential to its stability. Balaguer will be subject to pressure from these elements to shackle Bosch and cope with the PRD through semi-authoritarian tactics. The adoption of such a policy would in turn play into the hands of leftist extremists who would like to use such slogans as "dictatorship" and "neo-Trujillismo" to justify insurgency and recruit the vital support of non-Communist leftists.

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